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AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

STUDENT REPORT

OFFICER CAREER GUIDANCE

A Handbook for Commanders and Supervisors

Major Terry R. Lowe

Report #84-1615

"insights into tomorrow"

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REPORT NUMBER 84-1615

TITLE OFFICER CAREER GUIDANCE--
A HANDBOOK FOR COMMANDERS AND SUPERVISORS

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of
requirements for graduation.

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE
AIR UNIVERSITY
MAXWELL AFB, AL 36112

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UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER 84-1615	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. ADA145 926	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) OFFICER CAREER GUIDANCE--A HANDBOOK FOR COMMANDERS AND SUPERVISORS		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED
		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s) Terry R. Lowe, Major, USAF, [REDACTED]		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS ACSC/EDCC, MAXWELL AFB AL 36112		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS ACSC/EDCC, MAXWELL AFB AL 36112		12. REPORT DATE MARCH 1984
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 37
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) STATEMENT "A" Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) 7 Presents information to USAF commanders and supervisors to assist them in their roles as career guidance counselors. Provides a summary of USAF programs and directives related to officer career guidance, including motivation, career counseling, career development, assignments, and evaluation. Attempts to help commanders and supervisors train, motivate, and retain USAF officers.		

PREFACE

As an Air Force R.O.T.C. Instructor, I spent much of my time providing career guidance to my cadets. "Where am I going?" and "How do I get there?" were two of the most commonly-asked questions from these future officers.

I like to feel that I helped many of these young men and women find their own answers to these questions and that, wherever they are, they are content with their decisions. Unfortunately, experience has shown me that once these individuals reached their first duty stations, they became their own career counselors.

The average military officer in a leadership position is too busy "getting the job done" to be able to spend much time in providing career guidance. Commanders and supervisors having to "do more with less" often cannot see the long-term benefits of career counseling their subordinates when compared to the short-term demands of their jobs!

More recently, as a Wing Officer Career Development Monitor, I attempted to initiate or revitalize many of the program elements presented in this handbook. Looking back on this effort, my feelings are of partial success. The need for career guidance is real, but the information and motivation is often difficult to find.

I realize that many of you may have already learned the lessons in this handbook the hard way--through trial and error! However, it is my sincere hope that this handbook will guide and inspire you in your future counseling, motivation, and leadership of your subordinate officers. Tomorrow's Air Force needs these leaders!

* * * * *

This document will be published as a USAF handbook after review and approval of content by AFMPC.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION TO CAREER GUIDANCE

DEFINITION

Career guidance is "a process of structured intervention aimed at helping individuals to take advantage of the educational, training, and occupational opportunities that are available." (1:4)

PROBLEM

The United States Air Force continues to have a career retention problem--the separation or early retirement of highly-qualified officers, especially in critically-manned career fields. This problem threatens to become even more acute in the near future as the nation's economy improves, employment alternatives become more attractive, and the pool of eligible young men and women dries up.

This problem exists for many reasons. However, a root cause lies in the individual officer's disillusionment with his or her career development. There are officers without full information on career opportunities. There are officers who lack competitive technical training, advanced schooling, or professional military education. There are officers who are disenchanted with the leadership and motivation of their superior officers. All of these officers share one thing in common--perception of a lack of individual control over their military assignments and progression.

During one survey, "It was found that approximately two out of three junior officers leaving the Air Force have never been counseled on the advantages of an Air Force career! It is indeed disconcerting to think that some of these young officers may have decided against an Air Force career because of a lack of information or the absence of sincere and enthusiastic career officer interest and attention." (6:23)

I DON'T SEE ANY
CAREER PROGRESSION PROBLEMS
IN THE AIR FORCE!



RESPONSIBILITIES

Career development is the joint responsibility of many people.

- * Career management is the responsibility of AFMPC and MAJCOM personnel specialists. These people are tasked to meet the needs of the Air Force through matching and selection processes.

- * Career planning is the individual officer's responsibility.

- * Career guidance and motivation is YOUR responsibility-- as a commander or supervisor!

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in your critical role as career guidance counselor. It is designed to do this by summarizing motivational theory and approaches, career counseling techniques, USAF career development directives, the USAF assignment system, and the USAF evaluation system.

OUTLINE

To make this handbook useful and effective, its information has been organized as follows.

- * Chapter 2 discusses motivation of officers.

- * Chapter 3 provides specific guidelines and written aids for officer career counseling.

- * Chapter 4 examines present assignments, with emphasis on performance, formal training, and job enrichment.

- * Chapter 5 discusses future assignment possibilities, including career broadening, PME, and timing considerations.

- * Chapter 6 relates OERs to goal-setting, performance counseling, promotions, and selection processes.

- * Chapter 7 summarizes the need to incorporate these elements into an individual and effective career planning program.

* * * * *

"There are two doors to opportunity--PUSH and PULL!"

Chapter Two

MOTIVATION

DEFINITION

Motivation is "the willingness of an individual to expend energy to achieve a goal and satisfy a need." (3:14)

PROBLEM

"Air Force personnel who are poorly motivated toward Air Force objectives will show lower productivity, increased discontent with their circumstances, and a desire to get out of the Air Force." (3:14)

MOTIVATIONAL THEORY

Frederick Herzberg's famous theory on motivation states that people have two different sets of needs--motivators and dissatisfiers. Air Force studies have confirmed Herzberg's conclusions. One particular report, "A Study in Officer Motivation (New View)," identified specific factors pertaining to Air Force Officers. (3)

Factors which act as motivators, and can lead to increased job satisfaction, include:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| * Achievement | * Recognition |
| * Advancement | * Responsibility |
| * Growth | * Work Itself |
| * Patriotism | |

Factors which act as dissatisfiers, and can lead to poor job performance, include:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| * Administration | * Security |
| * Interpersonal Relations | * Status |
| * Personal Life | * Supervision |
| * Policy | * Working Conditions |

REQUIRED ACTIONS

Commanders and supervisors need to take two important, but distinct, actions in regard to these factors.

* First, you must try to improve conditions under your control which act as dissatisfiers. However, you should recognize that meeting these needs does not necessarily lead to satisfaction or motivation--it merely eliminates dissatisfaction!

* Second, you need to motivate your subordinates by ensuring that their job environments are rich in motivators.

JOB ENRICHMENT

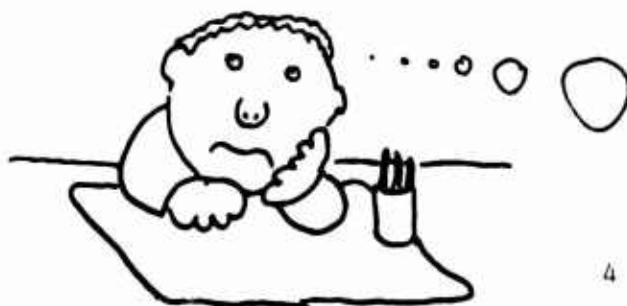
Job enrichment is the addition of motivational factors to the job assignment. It is a major undertaking, requiring considerable study and analysis. It is not job enlargement--merely making a boring or unchallenging job bigger. Job enrichment usually proves most beneficial where a job lacks responsibility or fails to challenge an individual. Supervisors may need to delegate more effectively and expand job descriptions and duties. (3:5)

UNIT MOTIVATIONAL PROGRAMS

Commanders and supervisors have many opportunities to enhance career motivation of their personnel. Commanders' calls can feature guest speakers or appropriate "Air Force Now" movies. Unit newsletters can be used to inform and recognize individuals. Staff meetings can be used to pass out current information on assignments, promotions, and selections. Every opportunity to motivate your subordinates can pay large dividends!

AIR FORCE MOTIVATIONAL PROGRAMS

Several years ago, Air Force directives on career motivation and career development were consolidated, as experience showed that motivation and development of officers are inseparable. AF Forms 90 (Officer Career Objective Statements) were designed to document and evaluate the adequacy and timeliness of career counseling. Unfortunately, the new regulation's (AFR 36-23) requirements for counseling and motivation are hidden in small print and have generally been unpublicized or ignored.



I THINK MY CAREER
PROBLEM IS THAT I
DON'T HAVE ANY RANK
TO PULL!

Chapter Three

CAREER COUNSELING

DEFINITION

Career counseling--a specialized function of career guidance--
"is the process of helping the individual make his choices in
such a way as to maximize the probability that his future
development will be satisfying to himself and useful to those
around him." (4:31)

RESPONSIBILITIES

AFR 36-23, Officer Career Development, specifies duties and
responsibilities for the Officer Career Development Program.

* Unit commanders are charged to "appraise each subordinate
officer's duty performance, ability, and aspirations, and counsel
him or her on a career that will best develop his or her potential."

* Supervisors are tasked to "conduct career counseling at
significant phase points throughout the subordinate's career ...
on career objectives, progression patterns, job opportunities,
career broadening programs ... and other counseling as required
for career motivation."

PURPOSE

The purpose of officer career counseling is to help provide
motivated, trained, and experienced leaders for tomorrow's Air
Force. Counseling can be general in nature, such as a periodic
session to exchange information, or it can be specific, such as
a discussion of job performance or an upcoming assignment.

Counseling can be a highly-effective tool for commanders and
supervisors, or it can be a frustrating, time-wasting effort.
Results, to a large degree, depend upon you and your individual
counseling techniques.

* * * * *

"Ideas are funny--they won't work unless you do!"

TIMING

Career counseling can be impromptu, when a subordinate requests information. Unfortunately, this may be too late, as the opportunity he or she seeks may already be lost. Additionally, this counselee-initiated approach assumes that all officers are willing to come forward with their concerns.

Another approach is that of regularly-scheduled counseling sessions. These can be related to OER rating periods, promotion or assignment eligibility periods, birthdates, or other frequent events. This counselor-initiated approach provides ample preparation time for all parties, but does not preclude additional counseling sessions for more immediate concerns.

DIRECTIVES

Attachment 3-1 references many of the USAF directives pertaining to officer career development. Be familiar with these and ensure that they are in your personal library or located in your unit. Have copies readily available for your subordinates and consider briefing their highlights at regular intervals.

Air Force Pamphlet 36-6, Assignment Information Directory (AID), contains a wealth of information pertaining to officer career development. These volumes should be considered mandatory reading for your officers.

PHYSICAL SET-UP

A proper counseling environment requires a comfortable setting with adequate privacy. A dedicated counseling room is desirable, but often your own office will have to do. A desk between you and your counselee may be preferred for formal, disciplinary counseling, but consider coming out from behind that imposing barrier for informal, problem-solving counseling.

Avoid interruptions--be willing and able to devote adequate time to the session. Try to be accessible to your subordinates when they need you.



USAF CAREER DEVELOPMENT PUBLICATIONS

AFR 36-1	<u>Officer Classification Regulation</u>
AFRP 36-i	<u>Officer's Career Newsletter</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Quarterly* 1 copy for every 3 officers
AFP 36-6	<u>Assignment Information Directory (AID)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Volume I - Rated Officers* Volume II - Support Officers* Worldwide AFSC Requirements* AF Form 90* PALACE Concept
AFR 36-10	<u>USAF Officer Evaluations</u>
AFR 36-20	<u>Officer Assignments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Assignment Policies* Special Duty Assignments* Overseas Assignments
AFP 36-22	<u>Officer Career Information</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* 1 copy for every five officers
AFR 36-23	<u>Officer Career Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Responsibilities* ADCAP* Career Progression Guides
AFR 36-26	<u>Reserve Officer Career Opportunity Program</u>
AFP 36-32	<u>You and Your Promotion--The Air Force Officer Promotion System</u>
AFM 50-5	<u>USAF Formal Schools Catalog</u>
AFR 53-8	<u>USAF Officer Professional Military Education</u>
AFR 53-11	<u>Air Force Institute of Technology Programs</u>
AF Form 193	<u>Record of Retention Interviews</u>

PREPARATION

Be prepared for counseling--know your people and their needs! Be aware of when your key people are coming up for assignments, promotions, or other career decisions.

Have a current career brief on your subordinates--CBPO can help you with this. If time permits, review their personnel records, training reports, and previous counseling folders. If the counseling session is impromptu, make a follow-up review.

SPOUSES

Extend the opportunity to your subordinates to bring their spouses to counseling sessions. Spouses are sometimes the silent, but critical, factor in separation or assignment decisions. This is an excellent opportunity to review many Air Force benefits that directly affect spouses.

CHECKLIST

A systematic approach to career counseling can be of great value. Attachment 3-2 is a sample checklist which can be referred to directly or used as a follow-up tool. Obviously, not all items need to be covered at each counseling session and additional items can be included as appropriate.

STYLE

Several styles of counseling are available, including directive, counselee-oriented, and mixtures. Some counselors like to talk about the central issue and will give a "mini-sermon." Others may ask their subordinates a series of questions, leading from one topic to another. A third group may prefer to listen, while the counselee directs the conversation.

Which style you use will vary, depending upon the specific purpose of counseling, the counselee's personality, and your expertise. In all cases, however, you should strive to use active listening skills, show concerned interest, and search for specifics.

GOALS

Help your counselee establish his or her own goals and direct the counseling toward the attainment of these goals. Ensure that both of you understand and agree upon specific actions and timing requirements toward both short-range and long-range goals.

CAREER COUNSELING SUMMARY

COUNSELEE'S NAME _____ RANK _____

SSAN _____ ORGANIZATION _____

_____ Unit Mission
_____ Present Assignment Progression
_____ Additional Duties/ADCAP
_____ Technical/Local Training
_____ Promotion Opportunity
_____ OER
_____ Recognition
_____ Civilian Education
_____ PME
_____ Next Assignment
_____ Long-Range Goals
_____ AF Form 90
_____ Policies & Procedures
_____ Suggestions
_____ Career Benefits

COUNSELOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

INFLUENCE

Be acutely aware of your leadership role and its associated power. Even if you cannot, or will not, help solve every career problem, many of your subordinates will take your "advice" and treat it as "gospel!"

DOCUMENTATION

It is important to keep a written record of information discussed for future counseling. This record may be the AF Form 173, a detailed sheet such as attachment 3-2, or merely a few key words on a memo for record. It may be accomplished during the counseling or shortly afterwards. But it is only with clear and specific comments that you, or the individual's next counselor, can monitor career progression and ensure effective follow-up action.

FOLLOW-UP

This is one of the most important steps in the counseling process. Find out the answers to questions or problems you could not solve during the counseling session. A list of key personnel on your base and up the chain of command can help obtain quick and accurate information. Get back in contact with your counselee as soon as possible and monitor his or her progress.

SELF-INSPECTION

Attachment 3-3 is a sample self-inspection checklist to help you ensure the quality and effectiveness of your counseling program. This could be especially helpful in large units, where several individuals might be responsible for career counseling.

DON'T!

Lastly, here are some "don'ts" to remember for counseling. (6:29)

- * Don't argue
- * Don't lecture
- * Don't interrupt
- * Don't force answers
- * Don't tell him he's wrong
- * Don't give unwanted advice
- * Don't fail to "follow-up" on additional information
- * Don't forget to stress the advantages of an Air Force career!

* * * * *

Murphy's Law: If you explain so clearly that nobody can misunderstand, somebody will!

INSPECTION CHECKLIST		PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES		
TITLE/SUBJECT/ACTIVITY/FUNCTIONAL AREA		OPR	DATE	
UNIT OFFICER CAREER DEVELOPMENT MONITOR				
NO.	ITEM (Assign a paragraph number to each item. Draw a horizontal line between each major paragraph.)			
	1. Has the unit commander appointed a qualified and motivated officer to be responsible for career development activities within the unit? (AFR 36-23)			
	2. Is the unit career development monitor authorized, in writing, access to unit officer personnel records?			
	3. Are career counseling facilities private, attractive, and conducive to good counseling?			
	4. Are applicable directives available and current?			
	5. Are career briefs for officers available and current?			
	6. Are career counseling records secured to ensure confidentiality?			
	7. Is the unit commander kept informed of key program aspects?			
	8. Has the commander established a publicity program in the unit aimed at increasing retention?			
	9. Does the commander counsel subordinate officers on their career development? (AFR 36-23)			
	10. Do supervisors conduct career counseling at significant phase points to ensure career motivation? (AFR 36-23)			
	11. Do supervisors seek out ADCAP training opportunities for their subordinates? (AFR 36-23)			

Chapter Four

PRESENT ASSIGNMENT

IMPORTANCE

"The best job for your career is the one you have now. That's where you build the performance record, expertise, and support that will propel you into that good job you want. Work for your boss. Keep him informed. Do the very best you can!" (5:4)

PROGRESSION

As a supervisor, you should periodically ask yourself the following questions about your subordinate officers:

- * How have they progressed in their present assignments compared to their peers?
- * Have they achieved their full potential?
- * Have they demonstrated the ability and desire for increased responsibility?
- * Do you set the example for them by demonstrating and rewarding integrity, loyalty, and commitment?
- * Have they received appropriate recognition for their achievements?
- * What is the next logical step for their career progression?

GOALS

Goal-setting is a vital part of mission accomplishment and individual satisfaction.

- * Have your subordinate officers set goals for themselves?
- * Are these goals realistic and attainable?
- * What are your officers doing to reach their goals?
- * What assistance do they need from you?

TECHNICAL TRAINING

Entry-level and advanced-level technical training courses are essential for career progression of your subordinate officers. AFM 50-5 lists formal courses available and their requirements. In addition, consider local training opportunities when asking yourself the following questions:

- * Do you submit your officers when they are first eligible?
- * Do "mission requirements" preclude their attendance?
- * What are their potentials as instructors?
- * Is their training put to use on the job?

ADCAP

The Additional Duty Career Advancement Program (ADCAP) allows company grade officers to earn an entry-level AFSC in selected utilization fields by training on the job in an additional duty capacity. This voluntary program is designed to give interested officers opportunities to enhance their career objectives through self-initiated action.

Supervisors are tasked to seek out ADCAP training for subordinates when proficiency in primary duties permit. Successful completion of ADCAP training expands the marketability of participating officers for career-broadening assignments. (10:3-1)

See AFR 36-23, Chapter 3 for eligibility criteria and training requirements.

SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Career officers must continue to grow professionally to improve present assignment skills and to increase their viability for promotion and increased responsibility.

Supervisors are tasked to "provide the subordinate sufficient opportunity and time for self-development in his or her chosen utilization field and as a professional military officer." (10:4-4) You not only need to encourage your subordinates to enroll in advanced civilian and professional military education programs, but you should try to schedule job requirements to reduce interference with the off-duty time they need to complete them.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Supervisors must be aware of their subordinate officers' contributions to the unit through other-than-normal job requirements. Active support of the Company Grade Officer Council (CGOC) program helps these future leaders develop. Do you give your officers the time and appropriate recognition for their involvement in unit athletics, special projects, and community participation? Try to include spouses and families in these activities.

MOTIVATION

Remember, an individual's present assignment is the key element in most career decisions. Make the job challenging, interesting, and rewarding. If problems arise, look for root causes, not symptoms. Get your people involved in formulating and implementing solutions. Make each job the best job it can be!

* * * * *

"Do your duty in all things. You can never do more. You should never wish to do less." (Robert E. Lee)



Chapter Five

FUTURE ASSIGNMENTS

OFFICER ASSIGNMENT SYSTEM

"The primary objective of the officer assignment system is to assign Air Force officers to enhance effective and sustained mission accomplishment. The career development of highly qualified officers to meet the needs of the Air Force is an important corollary factor." (8:1-1)

ASSIGNMENT FACTORS

Three important factors are considered in all assignment decisions.

- * First, and most important, are the mission needs of the Air Force. These needs are usually expressed in terms of unique requirements for a particular job.

- * Second is the availability of your subordinates. Officers who are completing a controlled tour are considered first, followed by officers who meet various time-on-station requirements. Volunteers who meet time-on-station requirements may be selected ahead of non-volunteers who have been on station longer.

- * Third are the individual desires of your officers. These are normally communicated via the AF Form 90, but officers are encouraged to call their resource managers at AFMPC or MAJCOM directly for specific information.

However, your officers need to know that the "primary consideration in the assignment process is the officer's current or potential qualifications to fill a valid requirement. All other factors, such as availability, volunteer status, time-on-station, and other criteria are secondary." (8:3-1)

CAREER PROGRESSION GUIDES

AFR 36-23 contains career progression guides for each officer utilization field. "They provide assistance to individual officers, supervisors, career managers, and commanders in determining a logical and attainable career by depicting progression and professional development opportunities for each officer." (10:6-1)

These guides divide each utilization field into five phases of progression--Initial, Intermediate Development, Advanced Development, Staff, and Executive. Each phase is related to typical development in several areas--years of service, grade, PME, education, training, and assignments. A sample guide is shown in attachment 5-1.

CAREER BROADENING

"Prolonged assignment in one environment--command or staff--is not a 'best' solution." (5:3)

Career broadening is offered to officers who have shown potential for increased responsibility. It usually begins in the intermediate development phase and may be within a utilization field or between fields. Career broadening can provide the diversification required for many utilization fields and command positions.

However, there are "those individuals who view their careers simply as a series of 'squares to fill.' To these officers, their current positions appear to be viewed as a brief stop-over point in the continuing process of becoming 'broadened.'" (5:3)

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

* Air Staff Training ASTRA is an informally-structured program operated on the management-intern concept. This highly-selective assignment introduces junior officers with 4-5 years of service to Headquarters USAF activities for 12-month training tours to help develop a potential resource of future Air Force leaders. See AFR 36-20 for further information on ASTRA and other Air Force executive development programs.

* PALACE SPOTLIGHT This MAJCOM-sponsored program is similar to ASTRA. Promising young officers with 4-7 years of service can volunteer for MAJCOM tours to help develop their leadership and management skills. AFR 36-23 has details on SPOTLIGHT and other MAJCOM orientation programs.

CAREER PROGRESSION GUIDE--PILOT					
YEAR	PHASE	GRADE	POB	TRAINING	EDUCATION
29	EXECUTIVE	Projected average authorization	Refer to AFR 53.8 for residence eligibility, AFR 50.12 for correspondence eligibility (see Base Education Officer for more information)	See AFM 50.5 for appropriate current courses	Graduate degree requirements in aviation field. For AFIT eligibility see Base Education Officer for current AFIT program quota
28					
27		Colonel 4% of authorizations			
26					
25					
24	STAFF		Senior Service School	Executive short course	
23					
22					
21		Lieutenant Colonel 11% of authorizations			
20					
19	ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT		Senior Service School	Short specialization/familiarization courses, such as: -Institute of Professional Development -Recon Staff Officer -Electronic Warfare Refresher -Tactical Fighter Commander course -SAC Air Weapons Delivery course -SAW counterinsurgency course -Advanced Management courses	Master's degree desired
18					
17					
16		Major 19% of authorizations			
15					
14	INTERMEDIATE DEVELOPMENT		Intermediate Service School	Combat crew training as required for transitioning to new aircraft Weapons Instructor School	
13					
12					
11					
10		Captain 39% of authorizations			
9	INITIAL		Squadron Officer School	Flying Safety Officer Course, Life Support and Survival courses appropriate to areas of operation Complete Undergraduate Pilot training and initial combat crew training for selected weapons systems	Bachelor's Degree desired, preferably in Engineering
8					
7					
6		Lieutenant 27% of authorizations			
5					

CAREER PROGRESSION GUIDE--PILOT		
ASSIGNMENTS	OPTIMUM PHASE POINTS	YEAR
<p>Officers who have demonstrated that they are qualified for further responsibility may expect assignments as Wing or Air Division Commander, Vice Commanders, or Deputy Commanders, Directors at SAI or above, Directors in Division Staffs at MAJCOM and Air/Joint Staff levels.</p>		29
		28
		27
		26
		25
		24
<p>Selected officers will fill squadron commander positions, become Directors of operations at lower and middle echelon headquarters, and be assigned to responsible jobs at MAJCOM and higher levels.</p>	<p>Transition selected pilots to executive / supervisory positions or technical support specialties.</p>	23
		22
		21
		20
		19
		18
<p>More pilots will begin to fill responsible positions at Wing, Air Division, and SAI. Highly qualified officers will receive assignments to MAJCOM and Air/Joint Staff positions.</p> <p>Toward the end of this phase a limited number of pilots will fill squadron operations officer and squadron commander positions.</p> <p>Most pilots who had been assigned temporarily to support duties will return to the operations field.</p>	<p>Majority of pilots in technical/support duties return to rated/rated management duties.</p>	17
		16
		15
		14
		13
		12
<p>Concentrate on further developing skills to upgrade to instructor pilot.</p> <p>Overseas service will aid in geographic broadening. Changes in mission and aircraft that will help provide lateral broadening are desirable.</p> <p>Changes in specialty or aircraft may be necessary to achieve force balancing or to provide equitable career progression opportunities and should be considered as career broadening. Officers changing rated specialties should initially concentrate on developing the related flying skills and expertise as to compete for the career positions within their new specialty.</p> <p>Officers demonstrating above average ability, especially in both flying and administrative duties, may be selected for lower level staff responsibilities. Officers should be assigned duties in operational staff positions at wing and air division as soon as possible in this phase.</p> <p>Toward the end of this phase, some pilots will be required in support areas. Pilots assigned in support duties during this phase are an operations resource immediately available for return to flying duties and should be utilized in a specialty in which they are most experienced.</p>	<p>Enter AFIT/technical training to qualify for technical/support utilization fields.</p>	11
		10
		9
		8
		7
		6
<p>Complete undergraduate pilot training and qualification in an operational aircraft. Develop skills to qualify for aircraft commander in multi-place aircraft or flight leader in fighter aircraft.</p>	<p>Combat Crew Training, Undergraduate Pilot Training</p>	5
		4
		3
		2
		1
		0

UNIQUE ASSIGNMENTS

* Special Duty Assignments (SDAs). Assignments such as AFROTC or AF Academy instructor, specialized aircraft crewmember, and exchange officer offer both challenging and interesting positions. AFR 36-20 contains specific information on application and selection procedures. Volunteers have priority, but are urged to apply for consideration early.

* Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT). AFIT programs are the principle means of meeting the need for specialized professional education and training in the Air Force. AFR 53-11 has details on such degree-granting programs as residence courses at Wright-Patterson AFB, selected civilian institutions, and the Minuteman Education Program, as well as the Education-with-Industry program.

* Departmental/Joint Assignments. AFR 36-20 discusses such assignments as the Air Staff, Joint/Allied Staffs, and PME faculty duty. The specialized manning considerations given to each of these positions reflect the significant responsibilities and impacts these activities have on the USAF mission.

* Directed Duty Assignments. Officers completing specified courses of intensive training or education are often directed to specific follow-on assignments.

RATED OFFICER CONSIDERATIONS

Pilots and navigators face additional constraints on their assignment opportunities. AFP 36-6, Volume I contains information on the following considerations and other rated programs.

* Aviation Career Incentive Act (ACIA). Rated officers are required by law to meet certain timing "gates" to continue receiving "flying pay." Briefly, these officers must accumulate at least 72 months of flying service by their 12th year since completing UPT/UNT and at least 108 months by their 18th year.

* Rated Supplement. This program provides an opportunity for rated officers to broaden their expertise by performing primary duties within support areas. Opportunity varies within rated utilization fields and from year-to-year, however, to meet established rated prioritization goals.

* Rated Crossflow. Rated officers have certain opportunities to crosstrain both in and between major weapon systems. However, training costs and individual experience requirements tend to keep most flyers within their initial assignment areas, such as fighters, bombers, or transports.

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME)

The major objective of PME is to enhance professional military competence by broadening perspectives and increasing knowledge, thereby preparing officers to assume higher levels of command and staff duties. There are three levels of PME:

* Squadron Officer School (SOS). This TDY school conducts five classes each year, each 8½ weeks long. Lieutenants and captains with two through seven years of commissioned service are eligible to attend, with selection on a best-qualified basis.

* Intermediate Service School (ISS). Majors are eligible to attend Air Command and Staff College, the Armed Forces Staff College, and other service schools.

* Senior Service School (SSS). Lieutenant colonels and colonels are eligible to attend Air War College, the National Defense University, and other service schools.

Attendance at ISS and SSS is limited to those officers who have demonstrated the greatest potential for increased responsibility. However, officers who are not selected to attend resident schools are strongly urged to complete appropriate levels of PME through correspondence or seminar programs. PME completion indicates both initiative and increased potential to selection boards. See AFR 53-8 for more details on PME.

TIMING

Officers should attempt to balance their time spent in various assignments. Frequent changes in assignments to increase both the depth and breadth of experiences are important parts of an Air Force career. However, it is probably no more desirable career-wise to move PCA or PCS every six months than it is to remain in the same job at the same base for several years.

When a subordinate officer is considering assignment options, he or she should take the following factors into account:

* OER closeout periods. Sufficient time of supervision should be ensured if an OER is desired before departure.

* Promotion eligibility zones. It's tough being the "new guy" when an elevated endorsement level is needed for a final OER before an officer is considered in-the-promotion-zone.

* Assignment vulnerability periods. Selections for non-volunteer assignments can take priority over preferred assignments.

However, if that once-in-a-career assignment comes along--take it!

PALACE FLICKS

Short audiovisual presentations of several career development programs, such as promotions and assignments, are available for individual or group viewing through local CBPOs.

AIR FORCE FORM 90

The AF Form 90, Officer Career Objective Statement, is the primary tool for individual officers to communicate their assignment preferences to their resource managers. It is important to fill these forms out completely and truthfully, as resource managers use computer listings made from these forms to determine eligibles and volunteers for assignments.

AFP 36-6 provides guidance on completing the AF Form 90. A sample "dream sheet" is included in this handbook as attachment 5-2. As a minimum, however, an effective AF Form 90 should:

- * Be CURRENT! Surveys have shown average AF Form 90s to be two or more years old! Officers should be encouraged to update their statements annually, but definitely upon PCA or PCS. If personal desires change, so should the AF Form 90!

- * Be LOGICAL! Suggested assignments should be progressive and reflect both the desires and expertise of the officer.

- * Be REALISTIC! A captain should not ask to be a wing commander for his next assignment--prerequisites must be met!

- * Be FOLLOWED-UP! Your officers should call their resource managers a few weeks after submission of a new AF Form 90 to ensure its receipt and understanding!

- * Be COMMUNICATIVE! Officers should be direct, concise, and clear on their AF Form 90s. Colored inks, diagrams, and emphasized punctuation can be used on the back side to highlight their unique qualifications, plans, and desires!

Encourage your subordinates to use local career development personnel for assistance in completing the AF Form 90. This may be the most important piece of paper in their records!

* * * * *

"If the assignment process hands you a lemon--MAKE LEMONADE!"

OFFICER CAREER OBJECTIVE STATEMENT (Lt Col and below) (THIS FORM IS AFFECTED BY THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 - See reverse)				Use reverse for remarks.	
1. GRADE 04	2. SSAN 123-45-6789	3. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) SMITH, JOHN A.	4. DATE Yr & Mo 84-09		
I. IMMEDIATE ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES					
A. CONUS	DAFSC	BASE	DUTY TITLE OR POSITION AND LEVEL		
FIRST PREFERENCE	5. 7316	6. Randolph AFB, TX	7. Base DP		
SECOND PREFERENCE	8. 7316	9. Lackland AFB, TX	10. Chief CBPO		
THIRD PREFERENCE	11. 7316	12. Mather AFB, CA	13. Base DP		
B. OVERSEA	DAFSC	COUNTRY OR AREA	TOUR LENGTH	20. OVERSEA VOLUNTEER STATUS (Check only one)	
FIRST PREFERENCE	14. 7316	15. Belgium	16. 36	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONVOLUNTEER <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER <input type="checkbox"/> COT	
SECOND PREFERENCE	17. 7316	18. Germany	19. 36	<input type="checkbox"/> EXTENDED TOUR <input type="checkbox"/> ANY SHORT TOUR	
				<input type="checkbox"/> ANY LONG TOUR <input type="checkbox"/> WORLDWIDE	
				<input type="checkbox"/> NON-CONUS RESIDENT	
C. MAJCOM/GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCES SHOULD YOUR BASE OR OVERSEA VOLUNTEER PREFERENCES BE UNAVAILABLE					
21. CONUS STATE	22. 1ST CONUS AREA	23. 2ND CONUS AREA	MAJOR COMMAND		
California	SW	SC	24. 1ST ATC	25. 2ND MAC	26. 3RD AFSC
II. SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT PREFERENCES					
A. CAREER BROADENING (Complete only if you desire this assignment next)					
ASSIGNMENT	DAFSC	DUTY TITLE OR POSITION AND LEVEL			
FIRST PREFERENCE	27. 7356	28. MAJCOM Special Services Staff Officer			
SECOND PREFERENCE	29. 7364	30. Base Chief Social Actions			
B. RETRAINING (Complete if you want to leave your current AFSC permanently)					
DAFSC	31. FIRST PREFERENCE	32. SECOND PREFERENCE	33. THIRD PREFERENCE		
C. RATED SUPPLEMENT: THIS INDICATES PREFERENCE ONLY AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A VOLUNTEER STATEMENT. TO VOLUNTEER COMPLETE SECTION IIA ABOVE.					
ASSIGNMENT	DAFSC	DUTY TITLE OR POSITION AND LEVEL			
FIRST PREFERENCE	34.	35.			
SECOND PREFERENCE	36.	37.			
D. SPECIAL DUTY APPLICATION: DO NOT COMPLETE THESE BLOCKS UNLESS YOU ARE A VOLUNTEER FOR A SOA ON YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT AND MEET THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA IN AFR 36-20, CHAPTER 8.					
38. TYPE ROTC	39. DATE DESIRED June 1985	40. LOCATION/POSITION SW/Det PAS			
III. LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES					
A. NEXT ASSIGNMENT PLUS ONE					
41. DAFSC 0026	42. DUTY TITLE OR POSITION Base Commander	43. MAJCOM/LEVEL/LOCATION ETC. SW/SC			
B. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL MILITARY OBJECTIVES					
	ACADEMIC MAJOR OR COURSE	DEGREE	STUDY METHOD	ENTRY DATE	COMPLETION DATE
ACADEMIC	44. Counseling	45. MA	46. Off-duty	47. In-prog	48. May 1985
PME	49. Air War College		50. Residence	51. Aug 87	52. May 1988
IV. CURRENT ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION					
VOLUNTEER STATUS FOR PCS MOVE WITHIN CONUS					
<input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER <input type="checkbox"/> NO PREFERENCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DESIRE TO REMAIN AT CURRENT STATION					
CURRENT	BASE Randolph AFB	MAJCOM AFMPC	DAFSC 7316	AUTOVON AND EXT 487-1110	DEROS Feb 76
DATE ARRIVED STATION	DUTY TITLE			SIGNATURE	
July 1982	Chief, Career Mgt Section			(signed)	

AUTHORITY: 10 U.S.C. 8012; 44 U.S.C. 3101, and Executive Order 9397.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSES: To allow an officer to indicate assignment preference within primary Air Force Specialty and two choices outside primary utilization field. Gives opportunity to indicate if retraining is desired and three choices for new career areas. Permits officer to volunteer for Special Duty assignment. Lets rated officer indicate rated supplement duty preferred. Gives officer three choices for MAJCOM and geographic location of assignment and two choices for oversea area of assignment. Permits officer to indicate long range objective and academic and professional military education desired.

ROUTINE USES: Allows MAJCOM and AFMPC Career Managers to learn the type of assignments training, and long range progression pattern the officer desires. The SSAN is used for identification and records.

DISCLOSURE IS VOLUNTARY. If information is not provided, including SSAN, career managers will be unable to properly assign officers in line with the officers' progression desires.

REMARKS

I have broad experience in both the administration and personnel career fields at all levels. After completing my M.A. in counseling I would like to be assigned as an AFROTC Professor of Aerospace Studies. If this is not possible, I would like to be assigned as Chief of CBPO or Director of Personnel at one of the listed bases. I would like to attend Air War College in residence, followed by an assignment as Base Commander, if I am selected for colonel. Finally, I am a non-volunteer for overseas, but request Western Europe if selected as a non-volunteer.

CY	SVC	RANK	EDUCATION	PME	ASSIGNMENT	LEVEL
1970	0	0-1	B.A. History	SOS (Cor)	Administrative Officer	Squadron
	2	0-2			Section Commander	Squadron
1974	4	0-3			Quality Control Officer	Base
	6					
1978	8		M.A. Counseling	ACSC (Cor)	Resource Manager	MAJCOM
	10					
1982	12	0-4			Resource Manager	AFMPC
	14					
1986	16	0-5		AWC (Cor)	AFROTC Commander	Detachment
	18					
1990	20	0-6			Base Commander	Base

Chapter Six

OFFICER EVALUATION SYSTEM

PURPOSE

The purpose of the USAF officer evaluation system is to provide the Air Force with reliable information on which to base personnel actions such as promotions, assignments, and selections.

RESPONSIBILITY

As a commander or supervisor, you have "both a moral and an official responsibility to maintain the integrity and reliability of the evaluation program." (14:34)

OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORTS (OERs)

"The most important factor to be considered [in creating a career plan] is duty performance, as shown in effectiveness reports. The OER is the standard by which performance is measured, potential is evaluated, and on which career advancement is predicated." (10:4-1)

In order for OERs to fulfill their purpose, comments must be both factual and informative.

- * Precisely what does your subordinate do?
- * How well does he or she do it?
- * Have you quantified these results?
- * Are both sides of the OER consistent?
- * Do your comments recommend PME? Regular commissions? Future assignments? Command positions?
- * Are your recommendations specific and honest?

Opening and closing statements on the "back side" of the OER are critical--if you aren't enthusiastic about your ratee, neither will the selection board be! Would you really want this person promoted from below-the-zone, working directly for you? If so, SAY SO!

PERFORMANCE COUNSELING

A vital, and often-neglected, element of the USAF evaluation system is FEEDBACK. Since OERs are so important in the promotion and assignment programs, they can be used very effectively as both counseling and motivational tools.

Although you do not need to sit down with your subordinates and discuss their OER line-by-line, FEEDBACK during and after the rating period can give them specific areas where performance has been excellent or requires improvement. Be prepared to offer specific examples to your ratees and to give them opportunities during the remainder of the rating period to improve their evaluation.

Face-to-face discussion of an individual's OER can be an emotional experience. Emphasize positive aspects, attempt to remain objective, and be honest with your subordinates.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

"The Air Force does not select officers for promotion as a reward for a job well done. Officers are selected for promotion based on their assessed potential to serve in the higher grade, in positions of greater responsibility. The criteria used to evaluate each officer's relative potential is known as the 'whole person assessment'." (11:10)

Factors included in this assessment and evaluation instruments include the following:

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>EVALUATE</u>
Performance	OERs
Leadership	Command/Staff
Breadth of Experience	Where/What/When
Job Responsibility	Scope/Exposure
Professional Competence	Expertise of Specialist
Specific Achievements	Awards/Decorations
Education	Level/Utilization

PROMOTION OPPORTUNITY

Promotion opportunities vary from year to year, depending upon vacancies in the higher grade. Typical recent promotion opportunities are:

* Major	80-90%
* Lt Colonel	70-75%
* Colonel	50-55%

However, actual selection rates will be lower, since all eligibles are included, rather than just those In-the-Promotion-Zone (IPZ).

Statistically, this means that the average captain you supervise has a 28-37% opportunity of being promoted to colonel during his or her career. However, individual AFSCs have different selection experiences.

BELOW-THE-PROMOTION-ZONE

IPZ consideration normally occurs after about 10 years for major, 15 years for lieutenant colonel, and 20 years for colonel. Officers are eligible for Below-the-Promotion-Zone (BPZ) consideration two to three years prior to being in-the-zone. Promotion boards may use up to 5% of the board's quota to major, 7½% to lieutenant colonel, and 15% to colonel for BPZ selections, providing that those being selected possess a higher degree of quality and potential than those they would displace in- and above-the-promotion-zone. (11:5)

OTHER FUNCTIONS OF SELECTION BOARDS

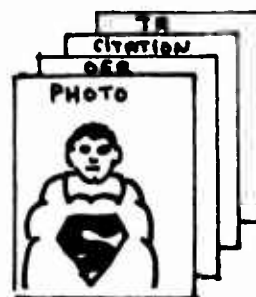
Boards convened to select officers for promotion are also used to select officers for Indefinite Reserve Status, Regular Commissions, and in-residence PME candidates. Great care is taken to ensure that these boards give "fair and equitable treatment" to all officers being considered, based on proven potential for increased responsibilities.

SELECTION FOLDERS

When your officers are considered for promotion, board members review only those documents in their selection folders, including the following: OERs, Training Reports, citations, selection briefs, letters to the board, and miscellaneous documents. Your subordinates should ensure that all documents are accurate and that their official photograph is current.

*"Hmmm...faster than a bullet...
...more powerful than a locomotive..."*

No higher headquarters experience?"



Chapter Seven

INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLANNING

IMPORTANCE

"The most common hindrances to career progression are lack of effort and faulty planning. Some officers refuse to recognize career opportunities that would qualify them for more responsible, complex duties." (10:4-1)

There is no BEST career plan--but the best careers are PLANNED!

INDIVIDUAL OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

AFR 36-23 states that individual officers should:

- * Plan their careers realistically.
- * Prepare to take advantage of career opportunities by career planning, using all available career information and guidance.
- * Actively seek advice on duty performance and career objectives prior to the preparation of an OER or AF Form 90.

"The Officer Career Development Program is an opportunity for capable, energetic, and dedicated officers--it is not a giveaway program. Simply put, [their] role in this effort requires performance, initiative, and dedication to the Air Force needs. In turn, [they] are able to participate in [their] assignments and in the development of [their] careers. Officers who understand this and apply it effectively are those who get the more demanding positions--positions that challenge and improve their abilities and lead to even greater responsibilities and rewards." (5:23)

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

"Inherent in your leadership responsibility is the opportunity and the obligation to train and develop younger officers to the highest possible state of effectiveness. But your responsibility does not end here--you have a continuing personal obligation to motivate these highly-qualified junior officers toward an Air Force career." (6:23)

OVERALL PLANNING

As a commander or supervisor, you can play a key role in helping your subordinate officers decide which of many career paths to follow, based upon their individual qualifications, goals, and preferences. You can help ensure that your officers are:

- * Educated. Assist them in their quest for higher levels of civilian and professional military education.

- * Trained. Provide them with opportunities and resources for both formal and on-the-job training in their specialities.

- * Motivated. Strive to eliminate job dissatisfiers, while increasing motivators through job enrichment.

- * Informed. Relate the benefits of an Air Force career to your subordinates at every opportunity.

ASSISTANCE

Career planning is a team effort. Resource managers, CBPO personnel, individual officers, and supervisors at all levels each play separate, but complementary roles in career planning.

Encourage your subordinates to take advantage of all assistance and career information. You can approve permissive TDY for them to visit AFMPC and MAJCOM resource managers for personal assistance.

SET THE EXAMPLE

"The key to career motivation is LEADERSHIP. Your own motivation is every bit as important to the career of the young officer you seek to guide as is his own. Nothing will have a more compelling effect than the image of yourself that you present to him!" (6:26)



SUMMARY

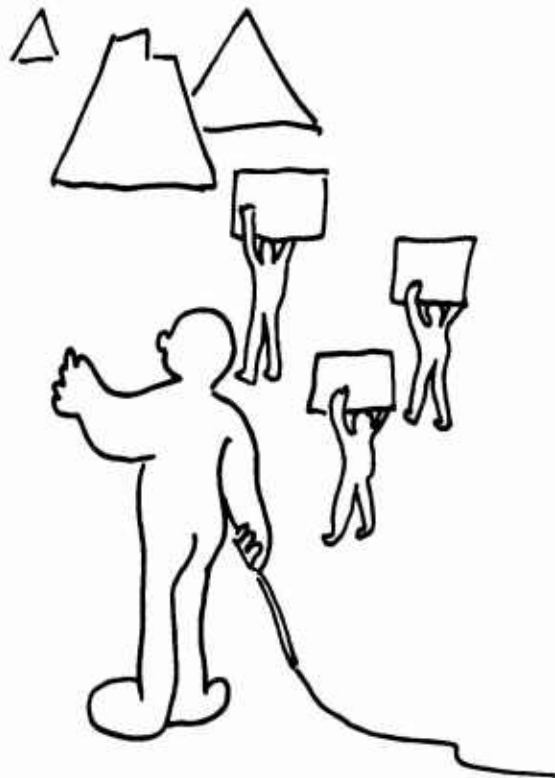
Remember, concerned and effective CAREER GUIDANCE can do two highly-important things for the United States Air Force.

* First, it can help retain quality officers who might otherwise become disenchanted with their individual career development and separate/retire from the service.

* Second, and equally important, it can help ensure that those officers who DO make the service their careers are better educated, trained, and motivated!

Career guidance--WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE--can help provide leaders for tomorrow's Air Force!

* * * * *



"Nothing is impossible for the man who doesn't have to do it himself!"

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